



Table Prayer Salt of the Earth

Table Center

Salt shaker, a box of salt

+ We Gather...

We gather at this table to reflect on our ability to flavor the world with the light and goodness of Christ. We begin by reflecting on how we have failed to be good salt for the world. Our response is "Christ forgive us..."

- + For the times we have failed to preserve the dignity of others...
Christ, forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to preserve the goodness of our bodies...
Christ, forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to preserve the health of our relationship with others...
Christ forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to preserve the health of our prayer and worship life...
Christ forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to preserve our relationship with our suffering brothers and sisters...
Christ forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to flavor life with kindness and gentleness...
Christ forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to flavor life with tolerance and forgiveness...
Christ forgive us.
- + For the times we have failed to flavor life with honesty and integrity...
Christ forgive us.

- + For the times we have failed to flavor life with generosity and service ...
Christ forgive us.

+ We Tell the Story...

Let us listen now to the Word of God.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot." (Matthew 5:13)

+ We Bless Our Food...

We pray...

Creator God, source of all goodness, you invite us to be the salt of the earth. To be salt that enhances not dominates, to be salt that preserves without destroying, to be salt that adds spice and flavor to the world. Through you all is possible. Bless our food and our time together—that we may be nourished to be flavorful disciples in our world. Amen.

+ We Go Forth...

Conclude by saying...

We leave our meal today with the challenge to be salt of the earth. As we close, we pass the salt shaker around the table and invite each person to mention, as they are holding the shaker, one action they will take in the next few days to be salt of the earth.

After everyone has shared...

We close our time together in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. Let us go forward to be the salt of the earth. Thanks be to God!



Table Prayer Unrepentant or Repentant— Still Loved by God

Table Center
Crucifix

+ We Gather...

Begin by saying...

God did not demand his people to first repent in order to be saved by Jesus' death on the cross. Perhaps we would still be waiting for that to happen! It is hard for us to understand that God loves and heals even the unrepentant sinner. The only reason we have the capacity to move from unrepentance to repentance is that God has first loved us and healed us while we were unrepentant.

A story...

One day Hilda came to me crying because her son had tried to commit suicide for the fourth time. She told me that he was involved in prostitution, drug dealing, and murder.

"What bothers me most," she said, "is that my son says he wants nothing to do with God. What will happen to my son if he commits suicide without repenting and wanting nothing to do with God?"

Although I tended to agree with her, I didn't want to say so.

So I said to Hilda, "Close your eyes. Imagine that you are sitting next to the judgment seat of God. Imagine also that your son has died with all those serious sins and without repenting. He has just arrived at the judgment seat of God."

Then I asked her, "How does your son feel?"

"My son feels so lonely and empty. I want to throw my arms around my son."

I asked her to look into God's eyes and watch what God wanted to do. God stepped down from the throne, and just as Hilda did, embraced her son.

(From *Good Goats – Healing Our Image of God*, Dennis, Sheila, and Matthew Linn, New York: Paulist Press, 1994, p.8-9)

Remembering...

Can you remember a time when you felt loved and accepted in your sinfulness by God or another? Are you able to imagine and accept a God who loves you in your sinfulness? Why? Why not?

+ We Tell the Story...

Invite someone to proclaim the Scripture reading...

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us."
(1 John 4:18-19)

+ We Bless Our Food...

We pray...

Loving God, your unconditional love for us heals us and nourishes us to wholeness. Bless our food and our time together, that we may be nourished through loving relationship and gift of food to be your lovers in our world. Amen.

+ We Go Forth...

Conclude by saying...

We leave our table today with the challenge to go forth to express in gratitude our thanksgiving to someone who has loved us at our worst and best—a parent, a good friend, a co-worker, God. Over the next few days take a few minutes to write and deliver a message of gratitude to that person. Let us go forward in rejoicing in God's love for us. Amen.